## **Midwinter Minutiae**

The dreary months of winter are upon us. Days end early, with darkness settling in around four o'clock. It's the perfect time to settle in with a book, a warm drink and if you are lucky, clever conversation with a colleague. Why not start enjoying the upcoming long winter evenings by boning up on your trivia knowledge? You will not only be popular guest at dinner parties but your loved ones will never grow weary of your ability to entertain them with a whirlwind of facts. Get started on this new you by perusing the <a href="Opposing Viewpoints in Context">Opposing Viewpoints in Context</a> database. This engaging online database is filled with information and opinions on hundreds of current social issues. Opinions from both sides of the issue are available on Wiki leaks, the Arab Spring or the Occupy Movement and then pick one to spring upon your unsuspecting pals.

Is music trivia more your bailiwick? Read <a href="the-Girl">the Girl</a> in the Song: the true stories behind fifty rock classics by Michael Heatly. In it he describes the "girlfriends, wives, rivals, exes, groupies, celebrities, and even complete strangers who inspired fifty of rock's greatest songs." Serenade your significant other with "Dear Prudence" and then casually inform her that it was inspired by Prudence Farrow, Mia's younger sister. Prudence had accompanied the Beatles to see the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi in India and apparently wouldn't come out of her room for the entire stay. I guess that explains the "won't you come out to play" portion of the song.

Are you having a "Kodak moment?" Language junkies will have a field day trying to stump you after you read I Love It When You Talk Retro: Hoochie coochie, double whammy, drop a dime, and the forgotten origins of American speech by Ralph Keyes. You can sit back and let them know that "Kodak moment" is a picture perfect moment, a moment worth remembering – like a picture. The line was used in the 1970s in a series of popular commercials launched by the film and photography industry giant, Kodak. Sprinkle your conversations with just a few of the "verbal fossils" in this book and you will be sure to be invited to trivia night every time.

Fun facts and trivia for bird lovers can be found in the <u>Birdwatcher's Bible a Complete Treasury</u>: Science, Know-how, Beauty, Lore, edited by Jonathan Alderfer.

Coffee lovers should take a look at <u>Coffee talk</u>: the <u>Stimulating Story of the World's Most Popular Brew</u> by Morton Satin.

Geography fans will be challenged by <u>How the states got their shapes</u> by Mark Stein.

And if every night you are enthralled by episodes of Jeopardy take a look at <u>Brainiac</u>: <u>adventures in the</u> <u>curious</u>, <u>competitive</u>, <u>compulsive</u> <u>world</u> of trivia buffs by trivia king (and Jeopardy champ) Ken Jennings.

With any luck, those long winter nights won't feel so long when you are engaged in your "trivial" pursuits.